

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A process for the manufacture of intermediate food products in ~~thea~~ form of hydrated concentrates of myofibrillar proteins from fish flesh, said process comprising the following steps ~~in succession in the order shown~~:

- ~~first of all~~, an initial pulp (B) of minced fish flesh is prepared (1) from fish fillets (A);
- said initial pulp is ~~then~~ washed (2) with water (C) to obtain a washed pulp (H) containing a residual fraction of lipids and sarcoplasmic proteins comprised between 0.1 and 3% of the weight of the pulp;
- said washed pulp (H) is ~~then~~ refined in the wet state (3) by removing a fraction of impurities (K);
- the refined pulp (J) is ~~then~~ mixed (4) until it is in ~~thea~~ form of a homogeneous emulsion (L);
- the emulsified pulp (L) is ~~then~~ drained (6) to produce a densified pulp (O);
- cryoprotectants (Q) are ~~then~~ added (7) to the densified pulp (O) to form a final pulp (R) suitable for freezing;
- the final pulp (R) is ~~then~~ packaged (8) in ~~thea~~ form of blocks (S);
- and said blocks (S) are frozen (9).

2. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the pulping operation (1) is coupled with the addition of water.

3. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 2, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the water is added in a ratio of at least one volume of water to three volumes of pulp.

4. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the pulping operation (1) is carried out as a function of a density gradient of the materialfish fillets.

5. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the washing operation (2) is composed of the following steps:

- water (C) is added to the initial pulp (B) and the whole is mixed (10) to form a water-pulp mixture (E);
- the water-pulp mixture (E) is centrifuged (11) and the resulting water (G) is removed;
- and the centrifuged pulp (F) is washed continuously (12) with water (C).

6. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 5, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ in the centrifugation step (11), ~~the~~ volume of water removed (E) is between 80 and 95% of ~~the~~ volume of water initially used.

7. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the mixing operation (4) is carried out until the homogenized pulp (L) is in ~~the~~ form of an emulsion with a stability of more than 10 minutes.

8. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the mixing step (4) is followed by a deodorization (5) of the emulsified pulp (L) in which the latter is evacuated.

9. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the operation (6) for draining the emulsified pulp (L) is carried out by centrifugal decantation.

10. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the final pulp (R) is subjected to a cold extrusion operation (7) during addition of cryoprotectants (Q).

11. (Currently Amended) An installation for carrying out the process as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that it comprises the following elements successively assembled in series in the order shown comprising:~~

- a pulping device (101) also provided with a waste recovery trough (139);
- a pulp washing device (102) provided with a system for discharging the wash waters;
- a pulp refining device (103) provided with a system (142) for discharging the fraction of impurities removed (K);
- a continuous pulp mixing device (104);
- a pulp draining device (106) provided with a system (143) for discharging the liquid fraction (P);
- a device (123) for adding cryoprotectants (Q) to the pulp;
- a device (108) for forming the pulp into blocks (S);
- and a device (109) for freezing the blocks (S).

12. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in thatwherein the pulp pulping device (101) consists ofcomprises a cylindrical sieve having perforations of different diameter according to a linear gradient ranging from 0.2 to 0.4 mm, and of a variable-pitch endless screw conveyor placed inside said sieve, which is provided upstream with a hopper.

13. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in thatwherein the washing device (102) consists of the following elements successively assembled in seriescomprises:

- a refrigerated double-chamber tank (110) equipped with a pipe for the optional addition of water (C) and with mixing equipment;
- a screen centrifuge (111);
- and a continuous washing device (112) consistingcomprising of a refrigerated double-chamber cylindrical tank equipped with a pipe for the addition of water, and with mixing equipment.

14. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in thatwherein the pulp mixing device (104) is a static continuous mixer of the LPD (low pressure drop) type.

15. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that it also comprises further comprising a deodorization device (105) located behind the mixing device (104).

16. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that wherein the pulp draining device is a centrifugal decantation device (106).

17. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that it also comprises further comprising a cold extrusion device (107) allowing the addition (123) of cryoprotectants (Q).

18. (Currently Amended) The installation as claimed in claim 11, characterized in that wherein the cold extrusion device (107) consists of the following elements successively assembled in series comprises:

- a conveyor of the hooded screw conveyor type (113);
- a controlled-throughput ram (114);
- and a double-screw extruder (115) equipped with means (126) for monitoring and regulating the pressure.

19. (Currently Amended) Surimi-base and other intermediate food products obtained from oily fish by the process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that wherein a residual fat content is between 0.1 and 1.5%.

20. (Currently Amended) Surimi-base and other intermediate food products as claimed in claim 19, characterized in that wherein the oily fish are sardine, scad, mackerel or sardinella.

21. (New) The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the pulping operation is carried out as a function of a density gradient of the fish fillets.